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Thrive Richmond

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Thrive Richmond

by Megan Mantlo

I visited Thrive Richmond with one of my friends Kristian on October 4, 2015. They are located in Richmond at 3105 Chatham Road Richmond, Virginia 23227. The sermon was held at 11:00 am and the preacher presiding over the sermon was Mark Thomas. Thrive Church of Richmond is of a Pentecostal denomination. There are a few things that differ between Pentecostal and Christian: Pentecostals do not believe in the Holy Trinity, they believe in divine healing, women are to practice modesty, and they believe in foot washing which is a ritual like baptizing or communions.

The Church has very little parking outside and the church itself outside is made up of brick and has a large window towards the top of the building with a cross covering it all the way up and across. It has one part in the roof that goes up into a steeple but its not on top of the main building to me it almost looks like an add on.

Inside the sanctuary the church looks traditional with wooden pews with red carpet. When you get to the front there is a stage and they have a projector they use to put the words for the songs up on so people who don't know the words can sing along and know what they are singing. The stage is a little more modern with these cube like structures that light up and they have equipment for music and for the preacher.

The congregation was dressed casual some were dressed a little nicer but it seemed a lot of people were in nice jeans and shirts and blouses. Everyone seemed nice but I sat with my friend Kristian and her family the entire time we were there and I met a few people that were friends with her family and came over and spoke to me were very welcoming. Everyone seemed to be friends and get along in the congregation.

The church has their own website that even has audio copies of their services so if you do miss church one day due to being sick or some other reason you can go to their website and still get to hear the sermon for that Sunday. If you go onto their website they give a lot of information about their church and their mission. Their mission statement has four parts the first one is That we do not die, we simply multiply. "We value raising up and producing leaders at Thrive Church. Paul shares with Timothy how to reproduce and multiply himself. The N.T. Church was one that multiplied. It was heavily involved in missions and church planting. At Thrive we also want to multiply through church planting, multi-site campuses and missions church planting." The second mission is Goonies never say die. It states that the goonies were a small group who "shared life together, stopped, evil, and found purpose." They say that they want their congregation to do the same thing in having relationships and stopping evil and find their purpose. The third part of their mission statement is "X never

marks the spot” This is in reference to Indiana Jones in the fact that he was always searching for treasure and the search never ends. They want their congregation to do the same thing to never stop seeking God because the search for him never ends. The fourth and final part of their mission statement is “You call him Dr. Jones...” This is another reference to Indiana Jones where his sidekick never liked people calling him by his first name and always made people call him “Dr. Jones”. They want everyone to do similar and greet and treat everyone with respect.

The church gives out sheets of paper that are fill in the blank to help you go along with the sermon and keep up and I really liked that so you can always go back to them when you are not at church. Kristian’s mother said that they normally have series of sermons so there will be three or four sermons in one series and they relate to each other. The sermon that Sunday was called “The Jonah in us”. The preacher spoke about the story of Jonah. He said “Normally people consider the story of Jonah a children’s story but it can actually pertain to everyone at some point in their lives.” He then started reading from the book of Jonah. In the book of Jonah the preacher told us why Jonah did not want to follow God because he was scared of what he would face. He then asked us “When you are faced with something are we going to do what God wants us to do or what we want to do?” He then used an example and asked us who liked chocolate ice cream and who likes vanilla ice cream and had people raise their hands. He then said “I see you all raised your hands and you all have an opinion but that does not mean it is the right opinion, Gods word is always the right choice. God will often asked you to do things you don’t want to do and then you have to

make a decision to choose Gods way or your way.” He also said that delayed obedience is disobedience. The preacher said we need to have immediate obedience.

I feel like the sermon as a whole had a good message. Yes, it can be scary to do all the things that God sends you to do but you have to understand that he is always right and he will protect you through your journey you just have to believe in him and do not be afraid. Do not run away from God. As far as the church goes I like more traditional churches instead of the new and modern I feel like it takes away from the reason you are there. I also wish that there was more explaining of the readings and given us more real life examples that we can understand. •

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